

JAN 18 1973

THE WEIZMANN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE

REHOVOTH • ISRAEL



מכון ויצמן למדע

רחובות • ישראל

New York

January 17, 1973

Dr. Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics  
Stanford University Medical  
School  
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Professor Lederberg:

I am writing to you on a matter outside my normal frame of activities - and also, I suspect, yours. But one to me so compelling that I want to share it with you.

It is to invite your support in securing the Nobel Prize in Literature for Elie Wiesel, artist and humanitarian, for which he has been nominated. Indeed, he has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, as well.

He is a survivor of the death camps of Auschwitz and Buchenwald, who has captured the imagination of young and old alike on several continents through the written and spoken word. Now 45 years old, he is the author of 13 books - novels, essays, memoirs - two to be published in 1973 - which have been translated into 12 languages. A list is attached.

In its truest sense, he may be called the poet of the Holocaust, who uses the written word as both art and anvil.

His work is addressed to remembrance of things past - the dual tragedy of six million Jews deliberately annihilated as a race, and the tragedy of millions more who failed to act against this greatest crime against civilization.

His books, with their mysticism, passion and compassion are a phenomenon of our time, in their command of a reading public cutting across barriers of place, language, religion, to make the best seller lists.

At this particular time in history, with its sweeping brutalization, it seems to me it is fitting that the highest recognition should be accorded to a great writer, unexcelled in projecting the depth of tragedy, and, simultaneously, in evoking hope for human advancement and for peace.

Dr. Joshua Lederberg

- 2 -

January 17, 1973

I am told that the Nobel Committee would be receptive to a letter of support from distinguished personalities, particularly Nobel Laureates, not in the field of literature, and also from heads of academic institutions in the United States and elsewhere in the world. I am writing to the Nobel Committee and enclose my draft.

I hope you share my feeling about the relevance of this matter. Your letter, if you decide to write it, should be addressed:

Nobel Committee  
Swedish Academy  
Börhuset  
S-11129  
Stockholm, Sweden

Time is of the essence. The letter should reach its destination not later than January 28, 1973.

With best regards and the hope that you will act,

As ever,

  
Meyer W. Weisgal

MWW:ml  
Enclosures

P.S. I have asked Lillie Shultz, of our New York office, to act for me in this matter and she will be calling you about this.